

SECURITY IN AFGHANISTAN: THE INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE FORCE (ISAF)

In the aftermath of September 11 and the U.S.-led operations against terrorist forces in Afghanistan, the United Nations Security Council authorized establishment of a 5,000-strong “coalition of the willing,” the **International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)**, to help the Afghan Interim Authority create a secure environment in Kabul, the country’s capital. Originally British-led and mandated through 20 June 2002, ISAF was extended in May by the Security Council for another six months, with Turkey assuming the role of lead nation.

Background

On 14 November 2001, five weeks into U.S.-led operations in Afghanistan, the Security Council endorsed an urgent meeting of Afghan political leaders to form an interim, post-Taliban governing regime for the country and to establish a framework for its physical, political, and economic reconstruction. The meeting, convened in Bonn, Germany, in early December 2001, brought together U.N. officials, Afghan leaders, and members of the international community to discuss the country’s future. The agreement that they reached on 5 December included an annex that sought international help to establish and train new national security forces. In addition:

Conscious that some time may be required for the new Afghan security and armed forces to be fully constituted and functioning, the participants in the U.N. talks on Afghanistan request the United Nations Security Council to consider authorizing the early deployment to Afghanistan of a United Nations mandated force. This force will assist in the maintenance of security for Kabul and its surrounding areas. Such a force could, as appropriate, be progressively expanded to other urban centers and other areas.¹

U.N.-Authorized, But Not a U.N. Operation

Security Council Resolution 1386, approved unanimously 20 December 2001, provided for the creation of ISAF and its deployment to Kabul and the surrounding areas.² The resolution recognized and welcomed the United Kingdom’s offer to organize and lead ISAF and called on U.N. member states to provide personnel, equipment and resources for the operation. On 23 May, the Security Council extended ISAF’s mandate for an additional six months with the adoption of Resolution 1413 and welcomed Turkey taking the role of lead nation from Great Britain.

ISAF is a multinational force with approximately 19 countries providing personnel.³ Although authorized by the U.N. Security Council, ISAF is neither organized, staffed nor funded by the United Nations.

¹ “Agreement on provisional arrangements in Afghanistan pending the re-establishment of permanent government institutions,” 5 December 2001. Annex I: International Security Force. The Bonn Agreement established an *Afghan Interim Authority*, to administer the country for six months; a *Judicial Commission*, to rebuild the domestic justice system; a *Central Bank of Afghanistan*, to regulate the money supply; a *Civil Service Commission*, to provide a list of candidates for key posts in the administrative departments; a *Human Rights Commission*, to monitor and investigate human rights; and a *Special Independent Commission for the Convening of the Emergency Loya Jirga*. The *Loya Jirga*, a gathering of 1,500 elected and appointed representatives from around the country, met June 11-19 to establish a two-year Transitional Administration for the country that is to lead to the drafting of a constitution, national elections, and a permanent government.

For a copy of the Bonn Agreement see <http://www.stimson.org/fopo>.

² For details on ISAF’s *Area of Responsibility (AOR)*, see “Military Technical Agreement Between the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and the Interim Administration of Afghanistan (‘Interim Administration’),” 31 December 2001. Note Article I paragraphs (2) and (4)(g) and Annex B: AOR: Kabul and its Surrounding Areas. Available online at: <http://www.operations.mod.uk/isafmta.doc>.

³ As of 20 June 2002, according to the Ministry of Defence, United Kingdom, there are 19 nations contributing to ISAF.

Participants in ISAF are expected to provide their own equipment and personnel – and pay their own way. In addition to Turkey and the United Kingdom, contributing countries include Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Spain, and Sweden. Most of these states signed a joint Memorandum of Understanding in London on 10 January 2002 to formalize their participation in ISAF.⁴

The United Kingdom initially offered to serve as lead nation for three months, seeking to hand over command responsibility to another country by 30 April 2002, but ultimately extending its role until June. During that period, ISAF was led by British Major General J. C. McColl, and a large fraction of ISAF's troops (1,300) came from the United Kingdom. Now under the command of Turkish General Hilmi Akin Zorlu, the number of Turkish troops participating in ISAF is planned to grow from 700 to 1,400 by the end of June, and British presence in ISAF will decline by about 900.⁵ The U.S. government sought out Turkey to take command of ISAF.⁶ In March, the Bush Administration asked Congress for \$228 million in emergency funding to support Turkey's leadership and participation in ISAF.⁷

Mission of ISAF

In establishing ISAF, the U.N. Security Council (Res. 1386) authorized it to “assist the Afghan Interim Authority in the maintenance of security in Kabul and its surrounding areas, so that the Afghan Interim Authority as well as the personnel of the U.N. can operate in a secure environment.” Further, the Council called on Member States participating in the ISAF “to help the Afghan Interim Authority in the establishment and training of new Afghan security and armed forces.” Resolution 1386 gives ISAF authority, under Chapter VII of the U.N. Charter, to “take all necessary measures” to implement its mandate. Under the Military Technical Agreement signed on 31 December 2001, ISAF has unimpeded freedom of movement throughout Afghanistan and is authorized to use military force in order to protect ISAF and its mission.

Role in Relation to Other Military, Political Efforts

ISAF operates separately from *Operation Enduring Freedom*, the U.S.-led operation focused on al Qaeda and the leadership of the Taliban.⁸ To prevent overlap between ISAF and *Operation Enduring Freedom*, Great Britain and Turkey agreed that U.S. Central Command activities would take precedence and that Central Command would have operational authority over ISAF.⁹ However, *Operation Enduring Freedom* forces provide logistical, communications, and other support for ISAF.

ISAF is intended to work closely with the Afghan Interim Authority and the U.N. Special Representative of the Secretary General, Lakhdar Brahimi who leads the U.N. Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA).¹⁰ The Security Council called on U.N. Member States and the neighboring countries, in particular, to provide assistance, including overflight clearance and transit rights.

Funding ISAF

With establishment of ISAF, the U.N. authorized the creation of a trust fund to support ISAF and the countries participating in the operation. While the countries participating in ISAF were expected to bear the burden of their participation, all U.N. Member States were encouraged to contribute to the trust fund.

⁴ The Czech Republic, Bulgaria and Belgium joined later.

⁵ “Turkey Gets Command of Kabul Force,” *Washington Post*, 21 June 2002.

⁶ U.S. Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, “Panel One of a Hearing on the Situation in Afghanistan,” *Federal News Service*, 26 June 2002. Testimony of Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz.

⁷ As part of the Emergency Supplemental request for fiscal year 2002 (FY02) submitted to Congress in March, the Administration requested \$28 million in Foreign Military Financing and \$200 million in Economic Support Funds for Turkey. Both programs are through the Department of State. As of late June, both the House and Senate had approved this funding as part of the FY02 supplemental, but Congress had not completed action on the bill providing this funding.

⁸ Operations against al Qaeda also include contributions and forces from other states, including Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain and Norway.

⁹ Letter from the Permanent Representative of the UK to the President of the Security Council (U.N. Document S/2001/1217, 19 December 2001) cited in UNSC resolution 1386.

¹⁰ See *Future of Peace Operations* UNAMA Backgrounder for more information <http://www.stimson.org/?SN=FO20020701376>.

**SECURITY COUNCIL AUTHORIZES INTERNATIONAL SECURITY FORCE FOR
AFGHANISTAN;
WELCOMES UNITED KINGDOM'S OFFER TO BE INITIAL LEAD NATION**

Resolution 1386 (2001) Adopted Unanimously

The Security Council this afternoon authorized the establishment for six months of an International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan to assist the Afghan Interim Authority in the maintenance of security in Kabul and its surrounding areas, and welcomed the United Kingdom's offer to take the lead in organizing and commanding such a force.

The Council, unanimously adopting resolution 1386 (2001) as orally revised, also called upon Member States to contribute personnel, equipment and other resources to the Force and authorized those States participating in it to take all necessary measures to fulfill its mandate. The resolution also called upon the Force to work in close consultation with the Interim Authority in the implementation of its mandate as well as with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Lakhdar Brahimi.

By other terms of the text, the Council called on all Afghans to cooperate with the Force and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations while encouraging neighboring countries and other Member States to provide the Force such necessary assistance as might be requested, including the provision of overflight clearances and transit.

The resolution also stressed that the expenses of the Force would be borne by participating Member States concerned; asked the Secretary-General to establish a trust fund through which contributions could be channeled to the countries or operations concerned; and encouraged Member States to contribute to the fund.

The meeting began at 1:12 p.m. and was adjourned at 1:16 p.m.

Resolution

The full text of resolution 1386 (2001), as orally revised, reads as follows:

"The Security Council,

"Reaffirming its previous resolutions on Afghanistan, in particular its resolutions 1378 (2001) of 14 November 2001 and 1383 (2001) of 6 December 2001,

"Supporting international efforts to root out terrorism, in keeping with the Charter of the United Nations, and reaffirming also its resolutions 1368 (2001) of 12 September 2001 and 1373 (2001) of 28 September 2001,

"Welcoming developments in Afghanistan that will allow for all Afghans to enjoy inalienable rights and freedom unfettered by oppression and terror,

"Recognizing that the responsibility for providing security and law and order throughout the country resides with the Afghan themselves,

"Reiterating its endorsement of the Agreement on provisional arrangements in Afghanistan pending the re-establishment of permanent government institutions, signed in Bonn on 5 December 2001 (S/2001/1154) (the Bonn Agreement),

"Taking note of the request to the Security Council in Annex 1, paragraph 3, to the Bonn Agreement to consider authorizing the early deployment to Afghanistan of an international security force, as well as the

briefing on 14 December 2001 by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on his contacts with the Afghan authorities in which they welcome the deployment to Afghanistan of a United Nations authorized international security force,

“*Taking note* of the letter dated 19 December 2001 from Dr. Abdullah Abdullah to the President of the Security Council (S/2001/1223),

“*Welcoming* the letter from the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the Secretary-General of 19 December 2001 (S/2001/1217), and taking note of the United Kingdom offer contained therein to take the lead in organizing and commanding an International Security Assistance Force,

“*Stressing* that all Afghan forces must adhere strictly to their obligations under human rights law, including respect for the rights of women, and under international humanitarian law,

“*Reaffirming* its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Afghanistan,

“*Determining* that the situation in Afghanistan still constitutes a threat to international peace and security,

“*Determined* to ensure the full implementation of the mandate of the International Security Assistance Force, in consultation with the Afghan Interim Authority established by the Bonn Agreement,

“*Acting* for these reasons under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations,

“1. *Authorizes*, as envisaged in Annex 1 to the Bonn Agreement, the establishment for 6 months of an International Security Assistance Force to assist the Afghan Interim Authority in the maintenance of security in Kabul and its surrounding areas, so that the Afghan Interim Authority as well as the personnel of the United Nations can operate in a secure environment;

“2. *Calls* upon Member States to contribute personnel, equipment and other resources to the International Security Assistance Force, and invites those Member States to inform the leadership of the Force and the Secretary-General;

“3. *Authorizes* the Member States participating in the International Security Assistance Force to take all necessary measures to fulfil its mandate;

“4. *Calls* upon the International Security Assistance Force to work in close consultation with the Afghan Interim Authority in the implementation of the force mandate, as well as with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General;

“5. *Calls* upon all Afghans to cooperate with the International Security Assistance Force and relevant international governmental and non-governmental organizations, and welcomes the commitment of the parties to the Bonn Agreement to do all within their means and influence to ensure security, including to ensure the safety, security and freedom of movement of all United Nations personnel and all other personnel of international governmental and non-governmental organizations deployed in Afghanistan;

“6. *Takes note* of the pledge made by the Afghan parties to the Bonn Agreement in Annex 1 to that Agreement to withdraw all military units from Kabul, and calls upon them to implement this pledge in cooperation with the International Security Assistance Force;

“7. *Encourages* neighbouring States and other Member States to provide to the International Security Assistance Force such necessary assistance as may be requested, including the provision of overflight clearances and transit;

“8. *Stresses* that the expenses of the International Security Assistance Force will be borne by the participating Member States concerned, requests the Secretary-General to establish a trust fund through which contributions could be channelled to the Member States or operations concerned, and encourages Member States to contribute to such a fund;

“9. *Requests* the leadership of the International Security Assistance Force to provide periodic reports on progress towards the implementation of its mandate through the Secretary-General;

“10. *Calls* on Member States participating in the International Security Assistance Force to provide assistance to help the Afghan Interim Authority in the establishment and training of new Afghan security and armed forces;

“11. *Decides* to remain actively seized of the matter.”

Background

When the Security Council met this afternoon it had before it a letter dated 19 December from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the President of the Council (document S/2001/1217), containing an annex addressed to the Secretary-General.

In the annex, the United Kingdom informs the Secretary-General that it is willing to become the initial lead nation for the International Security Assistance Force for Kabul and its surrounding areas under the terms of Annex I to the Bonn Agreement.

As stated in that annex, the responsibility for providing security and law and order throughout Afghanistan resides with the Afghans themselves.

The International Force, according to the letter, will therefore assist the Interim Afghan Administration in the maintenance of security. The United Kingdom states that its proposal is based on the willingness expressed to receive such a force and an authorizing Council resolution.

According to the letter, the United Kingdom is prepared to serve as initial lead nation for approximately three months, and acting with the authority of the United Nations. It will transfer responsibility as the lead no later than 30 April 2002. It, therefore, asks the Secretary-General to support efforts to identify a successor lead nation by asking Member States to urgently consider the possibility of taking over the role.

The letter states that the Force will have a particular mission authorized by a Council resolution that is different from Operation Enduring Freedom. The United Kingdom, as the lead nation, will exercise command of the Force, which will include troops and equipment contributed by other nations and will also have the support of the United States.

Regarding the relationship between the International Security Assistance Force and other forces operating in Afghanistan under Operation Enduring Freedom, the letter states that, for reasons of effectiveness, the United States Central Command will have authority over the former so that activities between the two factions do not conflict with each other, and to ensure that there is no interference to the successful completion of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The letter also states that a joint coordinating body will be developed with representatives from the United States Central Command, the Afghan Interim Administration and the International Security Assistance Force to deal with operational issues.

Resolution 1413 (2002)**Adopted by the Security Council at its 4541st meeting, on 23 May 2002***The Security Council,**Reaffirming* its previous resolutions on Afghanistan, in particular its resolution 1386 (2001) of 20 December 2001,*Reaffirming also* its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Afghanistan,*Supporting* international efforts to root out terrorism, in keeping with the Charter of the United Nations, and reaffirming also its resolutions 1368 (2001) of 12 September 2001 and 1373 (2001) of 28 September 2001,*Recognizing* that the responsibility for providing security and law and order throughout the country resides with the Afghans themselves, and welcoming in this respect the cooperation of the Afghan Interim Authority with the International Security Assistance Force,*Expressing its appreciation* to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for taking the lead in organizing and commanding the International Security Assistance Force and recognizing with gratitude the contributions of many nations to the International Security Assistance Force,*Welcoming* the letter from the Foreign Minister of Turkey to the Secretary-General of 7 May 2002 (S/2002/568), and taking note of Turkey's offer contained therein to assume the lead in commanding the International Security Assistance Force,*Recalling* the letter dated 19 December 2001 from Dr. Abdullah Abdullah to the President of the Security Council (S/2001/1223),*Determining* that the situation in Afghanistan still constitutes a threat to international peace and security,*Determined* to ensure the full implementation of the mandate of the International Security Assistance Force, in consultation with the Afghan Interim Authority and its successors established by the Bonn Agreement,*Acting* for these reasons under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations,

1. *Decides* to extend the authorization, for a period of six months beyond 20 June 2002, of the International Security Assistance Force, as defined in resolution 1386 (2001);
2. *Authorizes* the Member States participating in the International Security Assistance Force to take all necessary measures to fulfill the mandate of the International Security Assistance Force;
3. *Calls upon* Member States to contribute personnel, equipment and other resources to the International Security Assistance Force, and to make contributions to the Trust Fund established pursuant to resolution 1386 (2001);
4. *Requests* the leadership of the International Security Assistance Force to provide monthly reports on implementation of its mandate, through the Secretary-General;
5. *Decides* to remain actively seized of the matter.